Steps to reduce the risks of accidental use of Nuclear Weapons

*175. SHRI ABANI ROY: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether India has urged the nuclear weapon States to undertake immediate and urgent steps to reduce the risks of unintentional and accidental use of nuclear weapons;

(b) if so, the reaction of the United Nations in this regard; and

(c) to what extent the use of nuclear weapons would be checked in the world?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI JASWANT SINGH): (a) to (c) At India's initiative a new resolution "Reducing Nuclear Danger" was adopted by the UN General Assembly last year. The resolution, *inter alia'*, calls for a review of nuclear doctrines and in that context, immediate and urgent steps to reduce the risks of unintentional and accidental use of nuclear weapons. The resolution was introduced again this year. 104 countries voted in favour of the resolution, 43 against and there were 17 abstentions. Government hopes that this initiative would help generate momentum towards the adoption of measures that reduce the threat of nuclear war and promote nuclear disarmament.

In-Effectiveness of Bureaucratic Machinery

*176. DR. (MS.) P. SELVIE DAS:
SHRI GANDHI AZAD:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item which appeared in The *Tribune* dated the 19th November, 1999 under the caption "overhaul administrative machinery" wherein it has been stated that the bureaucratic machinery has since collapsed due to casualness and inefficiency in their management;

(b) whether any assessment about efficiency of bureaucratic imperialism has been made;

(c) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor; and

(d) whether it is a fact that bureaucratic sprawl, imperialism and

casualness have been increasing; if so, what steps have been taken to improve bureaucratic efficiency?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STATISTICS AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE REFORMS AND PUBLIC GRIEVANCES OF THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS (SHRI ARUN SHOURIE): (a) Yes Sir.

(b) to (d) Administrative efficiency and effectiveness are matters which receive the attention of the Government on a continuous basis. Measures have been taken to make the administration accountable, transparent and responsive to the needs and expectations of the people. Several Ministries/Departments/Organisations with considerable public interface have already introduce Citizens' Charters indicating broadly the quality of service, the public would be entitled to, within a specified time frame. Information and Facilitation Counters have been set up by 45 Ministries/Departments/ Central Government Organisations to provide information on procedures and the schemes of the concerned organisation as well as to access information pertaining to the status of individual cases.

Steps have also been taken to strengthen the existing machinery for redress of public grievances. Most of the Ministries/Departments have fixed time limits for handling grievances received from the Members of Parliament, and the names of the officers handling grievances have been publicised. A system of categorising all the grievances and their computerised monitoring has been installed in various Ministries/Departments and this is linked to the main terminal in the Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances.

The Government has also taken steps for simplification of laws,

rules and procedures. Towards this end, over 40 Departments have undertaken, through expert Task Forces or by internal exercises, a detailed review of all the laws, regulations and procedures administered by them.

A Commission on Review of Administrative Laws was set up on 8 May, 1998 under the Chairmanship of Shri P.C. Jain with a view to identify proposals for amendment/repeal of existing laws, regulations and procedures having inter-sectoral impact so as to make them objective, transparent and predictable. The Commission submitted its report on 30 September, 1998.

The important recommendations of the afore-mentioned Commission include repeal of almost 50% of Central Laws (1382 out of 2500 Laws), expeditious amendments to a list of 109 identified Acts, documentation of administrative laws (rules, regulations, executive instructions) by all the Ministries/Departments, harmonisation of statutes and laws with reference to the perspective of domestic and foreign investors, trade and industry, consumers, exporters and importers, and development of a viable alternative disputes resolution machinery.

The Government has constituted a Standing Committee under the Chairmanship of Secretary (Personnel) for monitoring the follow-up action on implementation of the recommendations contained in the report. The Committee has held fifteen meetings with different Ministries/Departments in groups. Most of the Ministries/ Departments have initiated action to make suitable amendments/ modifications to or repeal the Acts and Laws being administered by them with a view to improve service delivery and bring about transparency in the functioning of Government.

In addition to the specific measures mentioned above, the Government has also taken certain other steps to improve its efficiency and effectiveness. These steps include modernisation of Government offices, a software package to track the movement of files, a scheme to grant awards to members of the public and the employees for suggestions made to improve the overall efficiency, productivity and work culture of the staff, documentation of best practices in Central and State Government Organisations, etc.